

Mayor's Infrastructure Finance Committee

Efficiency Work Group

Interim Work Summary

Community Open House
January 30, 2003 - Walt Library



Efficiency Work Group: Topic Areas

Big Picture Policies

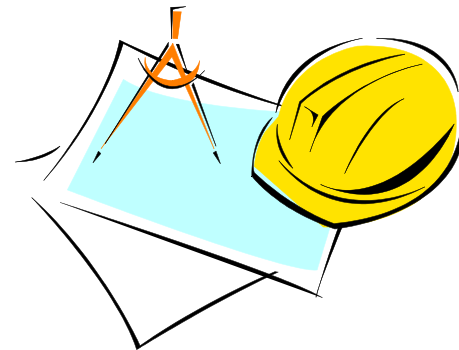
These proposals address issues of broad community concern. They involve major infrastructure development and growth policies. Many of the proposals are grounded in the Comprehensive Plan and its implementation. Other focus of management issues and financial considerations.

Systems and Processes

These proposals consider the city's procedures for bringing about the installation and maintenance of urban infrastructure. This includes such topics how the city obtains public right-of-way, bidding and contractual management practices, interagency coordination, and the city's procedures used for plan review.

Infrastructure Elements

These proposals examine the more detailed aspects of infrastructure design and construction. These include matters pertaining to roadway construction phasing, grading profiles, and conversion of rural road to urban streets.

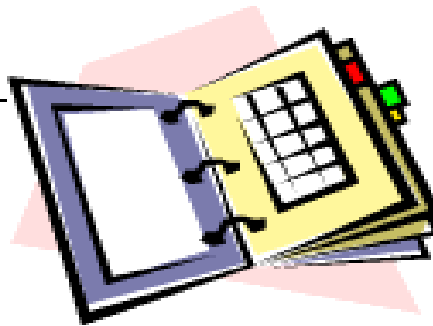


BIG PICTURE POLICIES

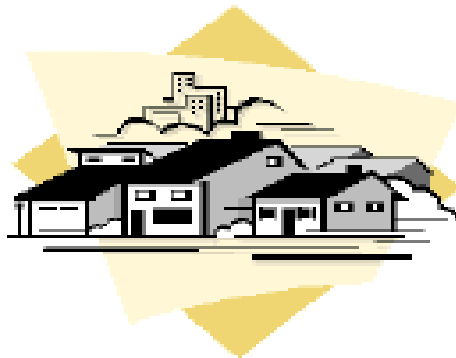
Proposal	Description	Proposal Status
(A) Create Water and Wastewater Utilities Oversight Board(s)	Consider creation of either a single or two separate citizen boards to provide policy direction and management oversight to the city's Water and Wastewater Utility Systems. Members would likely be appointed by the Mayor with approval by the Lincoln city Council.	No formal Efficiency Work Group recommendation at this time. The Work Group continues to weigh the merits of this proposal.
(B) Utilize "special districts" to assess the costs of future infrastructure improvements	Consider creation of "special districts" in urban growth areas to collect funds for infrastructure improvements.	No formal Efficiency Work Group recommendation at this time. The Efficiency Work Group continues to weigh the merits of this proposal. Consideration is being given to forwarding this concept to either the Legislation or Finance Work Groups for further discussion.
(C) Study causes for apparent cost differences between the use of "executive orders" vs. "special assessment districts"	Infrastructure projects constructed under executive orders typically are less expensive than similar projects built through a special assessment district process.	The Efficiency Work Group feels that they have investigated this option as much as they are able. Recommend forwarding this matter to the Finance Work Group.
(D) Create Park Districts	Consider creation of "park districts" to fund and construct city parks.	This concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.



<p>(E) Ensure consistency and continuity of Comprehensive Plan implementation</p>	<p>Seek capital cost savings by following the infrastructure program shown in the Comprehensive Plan.</p>	<p>The Efficiency Work Group will recommend that the following statement be incorporated into the Group's 'preamble':</p> <p><i>"Savings could be achieved if the city commits to following the infrastructure program shown in the Comprehensive Plan. Indiscriminate and/or frequent departures from the Plan's infrastructure program discourage and undermine long-term facilities planning and reduce the cost savings that such planning can provide."</i></p>
<p>(F) Prioritize the city's CIP projects relative to the Comprehensive Plan</p>	<p>Consider means to closely tie the programming of capital improvements with the Comprehensive Plan's growth phasing program and policies.</p>	<p>The Efficiency Work Group will recommend the adoption of the following statement:</p> <p><i>"Institute policies and procedures for closely tying the programming of capital projects (i.e., CIP) with the growth phasing program and related policies in the Comprehensive Plan."</i></p>
<p>(G) Extend the time for phasing in the installation of infrastructure improvements</p>	<p>Consider cost savings that could be achieved if infrastructure improvements are phased in over a longer period of time than called for in the Comprehensive Plan.</p>	<p>The Efficiency Work Group has two different statements under consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>We do not need to build out the entire infrastructure system for full development of the 25 year plan in 12 years. We do need to provide right-of-way per the plan. We recommend phasing infrastructure as needed.</i> ● <i>Cost savings could be achieved if the infrastructure improvements called for in the plan are phased in over a longer period of time.</i>



<p>(H) Develop guidelines for infrastructure projects not in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan</p>	<p>Consider formulation of clear policies concerning infrastructure improvement requests that do not conform with the Comprehensive Plan.</p>	<p>The Efficiency Work Group has two different statements under consideration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Develop clear policies for requests that are not in conformance with the adopted Comprehensive Plan. However, these policies must be open enough to allow projects that create and/or retain jobs for the community.</i> ● <i>Using a cost/benefit analysis process, consider whether the city should require certain concessions and payments from developers of such projects.</i>
<p>(I) Ensure that infrastructure in existing Lincoln neighborhoods is maintained</p>	<p>Consider means for maintaining the existing infrastructure in Lincoln neighborhoods.</p>	<p>The Work Group is considering recommending that the following statement be incorporated into the Group's 'preamble':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Examine options for increasing the efficient delivery of maintenance services to older areas of the community without adversely affecting the long term quality of the infrastructure or services to the areas.</i>



(J) Use force mains to provide temporary sanitary wastewater services in selected situations	Gravity flow wastewater mains are the primary technique used by the city sanitary sewer system. Force mains and lift stations are typically discouraged. Consider selected utilization of force mains and lift stations.	<p>The Efficiency Work Group is considering recommending the selected deployment of force main or lift stations as a temporary means for opening an area for future development. Developers would have to share in the costs of such systems. These systems would be replaced at such time as gravity flow services became available. The use of force mains and lift stations would need to take into consideration these issues:</p> <p>(1) the collection main into which the effluent is to be pumped must have available capacity for the projected life of the force main or lift station;</p> <p>(2) a written agreement regarding the specific geographic area contributing effluent via the force main or lift station must be defined prior to the provision of services; and,</p> <p>(3) as force mains and lift stations are more expensive to maintain than gravity flow system, a written agreement regarding the developers contribution to the maintenance of the main or station must be in place prior to the provision of services.</p>
(K) Use special assessment districts for rehabilitation and reconstruction projects	Consider use of special assessment districts for the rehabilitation or reconstruction of arterial streets, water mains, and sanitary sewer lines that have served their useful life. Properties benefitting from the rehabilitation or reconstruction of those facilities should pay for the benefits thereby conferred.	This concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.
(L) Create Street Construction Fund Oversight Board	Consider creation of a citizen board to provide policy and management oversight to the city's street construction program.	The specific concept of an oversight board for managing city streets has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.

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SYSTEM AND PROCESSES

Proposal	Description	Proposal Status
(A) Use “Design-Build” bidding approach when letting infrastructure project contracts	Consider use of the “design-build” bidding approach for city infrastructure projects. This approach allows the city to enter into a single contract for both the design and construction of a facility. This approach will require a change in both State legislation and the Lincoln City Charter.	This concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.
(B) Use “Indefinite Delivery” contract approach when letting infrastructure projects	Consider use of “indefinite delivery contract” approach. Such contracts contain general terms (i.e., a generic description of the type of work to be performed) along with a set fee schedule (i.e., how much the city would pay for a given “unit” of work.) These contracts could be written for construction contracts or professional services. Firms are retained by the city to perform work as needed by the city. This approach can save time during the procurement process and possibly during the actual delivery of services.	This concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.



<p>(C) Aggregate infrastructure construction projects into a single bid</p>	<p>Combine several infrastructure construction projects into a single contract. Such a contract may span more than a single year. Approach may encourage efficiencies from the resulting economy of scale.</p>	<p>The Efficiency Work Group is considering recommending the following:</p> <p><i>“Lump several construction projects (perhaps covering a two-year period) into a single contract in order to encourage efficiencies and economies of scale that such a method may provide.”</i></p> <p><i>“The following caveats would need to be applied:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>Give a forewarning to local contractors that such an approach is to be implemented so that they can prepare to position themselves strongly for an aggregate contract; and,</i> ● <i>City officials must use appropriate judgement in knowing when it is better to aggregate projects or to leave them separate.”</i>
<p>(D) Pursue a program of advanced acquisition for right-of-way (ROW) along future arterial corridors -- most notably those corridors in the county</p>	<p>Consider ways for obtaining the public right-of-way for future arterials well in advance of development. The acquisition of ROW represents a major cost for roadway and utilities projects, and its acquisition can be a very time consuming process.</p>	<p>The Efficiency Work Group is considering recommending the following:</p> <p><i>“● The City of Lincoln should move ahead with a Memorandum of Understanding with Lancaster County for joint acquisition policies and procedures. This should be formalized as soon as possible.</i></p> <p>● <i>Get an early start for acquisition by providing city staff with ROW plans at least one year in advance. This will require a change to internal policy but does not require a change in any statutes.”</i></p>



(E) Modify acquisition process to shorten the time needed to obtain right-of-way	Consider how the present right-of-way acquisition process can be changed so that less time is taken. Current city policies support the acquisition of ROW on a “soon-to-be-built” basis.	The Efficiency Work Group is considering not supporting this concept.
(F) Increase city’s right-of-way acquisition staff and available resources	Consider providing additional staff and resources toward acquiring ROW to possibly allow for the speedier construction of infrastructure improvements.	The Efficiency Work Group is considering supporting the following concept: <i>“We recognize that the staff and resources implementing the right-of-way acquisition program are in the city’s Urban Development Department. A large part of the actual ROW acquisition is done through contract employees, not city staff. The city needs to ensure that fiscal resources are available to have enough staff to complete this task in a timely manner.”</i>
(G) Examine possible changes in the city’s platting process	Consider options for speeding the city’s platting process that may allow for time efficiencies to be obtained.	This concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.
(H) Examine possible changes in the city’s “pro rata ordinance/policy” concerning over-sizing of utility mains	Clarify and formalize the city’s “over-sizing standards” and methods for collecting fees from future developments for utility mains.	This concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.
(I) Make greater use of the city’s inspection program to speed infrastructure improvement installation and quality	Consider using the city’s current inspection program in a more aggressive fashion to ensure that infrastructure improvements are installed by private contractors in the most timely and quality fashion possible.	This concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.
(J) Expand use of city’s grant writing program	Consider means for expanding the city’s grant writing program to secure all reasonably available State and Federal grant monies for infrastructure projects.	The Efficiency Work Group is forwarding this concept to the Finance Work Group.



(K) Promote greater inter-agency communication and cooperation	Consider means, methods and systems for promoting interagency cooperation and coordination to ensure the efficient design, construction, and maintenance of city infrastructure.	The Efficiency Work Group is considering supporting the following concept: “Examine and describe ways for enhancing the communication for and coordination of capital projects between Public Works, LES, LPS, Parks and Recreation, other utilities, and other city and county agencies.”
(L) Place greater responsibility for the quality of their construction drawings on private engineers	Consider changes to the city’s present system that provides for a “first in, first out” approach. This results in incomplete drawings being given the same status as complete drawings. Incomplete drawings take more city time to review and slows the process by weeks or months. Complete products should be given priority over incomplete projects.	The Efficiency Work Group is considering supporting the following concept: <i>“In order to have more timely construction drawings, city staff will undertake the following:</i> ● <i>Give priority to completed plans over partial plans. Note that this refers primarily to subdivision work.</i> ● <i>Put the responsibility on the private developer and design team to be in compliance with City and State guidelines and requirements. Note the power and responsibility and assumption of liability that comes with the engineer’s stamp of approval.”</i>



INFRASTRUCTURE ELEMENTS

Proposal	Description	Proposal Status
(A) Review policies governing the size of major water distribution mains within the urban area	Examine the assumptions used by the City Public Utilities Department in calculating the preferred size of future water distribution mains.	The concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.
(B) Review guidelines governing the materials used for water distribution mains	Examine the assumptions used by the City Public Utilities Department in selecting the materials used for the City's water distribution mains.	The concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.
(C) Review policies governing the size of major wastewater collection mains serving the urban area	Examine the assumptions used by the City Public Utilities Department in calculating the preferred size of future wastewater collection mains.	The concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.
(D) Review guidelines governing the materials used for wastewater collection mains	Examine the assumptions used by the City Public Utilities Department in selecting the materials used for the City's wastewater collection mains.	The concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.
(E) Review wastewater system policies governing the use of a single main vs. parallel mains in servicing a drainage basin	Consider the assumptions concerning the initial construction of a single large wastewater collection main vs. the incremental construction of separate smaller parallel collection mains.	The concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.
(F) Review material and construction standards for city streets	Consider further examination of material and construction standards currently used for city streets. This may include thickness of materials, base materials, construction techniques, or other pertinent aspects of the overall construction process.	The concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.



(G) Review standard for determining the width of travel and turn lanes on city arterial streets	Consider the current policies generally calling for travel and turn lanes to be 12 feet in width along new arterials.	The concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.
(H) Review city policy for dual left turn lanes on future arterials	Consider the application of the city's policy in planning for the future installation of dual left turn lanes along arterial streets.	The concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.
(I) Review the city's policy concerning the striping along city arterial streets	Consider city standards for the frequency of striping travel lanes, turn lanes, and pedestrian crossings. City seems to be falling behind in keeping these facilities maintained in the older areas.	The concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.
(J) Minimize the instances when retaining walls would be needed along arterial streets	Consider means for using grading and wider rights-of-way to minimize the need for retaining walls along arterial streets. This could result in a notable cost savings.	The Efficiency Work Group is considering favoring this option and is seeking clarification on the likely projected cost savings of this option.
(K) Review assumptions used in programming future traffic and pedestrian signals along new arterial streets in urban growth areas	Consider the city's current assumption of about 3.5 traffic signals and 1 pedestrian signal light along each mile of arterial. Use of a lower ratio could save funds. A Work Group member estimated as much as \$212,500 per mile for traffic signals and \$40,000 per mile for pedestrian signals.	The concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.
(L) Review developer contributions for arterial street projects	Consider past city policy of having the developer contribute to the cost of arterial street construction.	This concept may be a moot point given the recent adoption of impact fees. The Efficiency Work Group is considering elimination of this study issue.
(M) Review sureties policy for sidewalks and street trees along arterials	Consider revision to requirement that developers post sureties guaranteeing the installation of sidewalks and street trees along arterials.	The concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.
(N) Review costs incurred for burying LES lines as part of roadway projects	Consider who should pay for the burying of existing LES overhead lines as part of arterial street construction projects.	The concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.



(O) Review policies governing reimbursement of LES costs	Consider a policy allowing for LES cost reimbursement from city general funds.	The concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.
(P) Review policy allowing city to build arterial streets in urban growth areas as a final cross section	Consider a policy allowing the city to construct future arterial streets in urban growth areas as a four lane cross section.	The concept has yet to be formally discussed by the Efficiency Work Group.
(Q) Introduce the use of an “outside-in” construction phasing approach	Consider the use of the roadway construction phasing process that provides for the outside two travel lanes (along with curbs, gutters, stormwater systems and utilities) to be constructed first. The remaining two travel lanes of the roadway and turn lanes will be built as necessary and appropriate at a future date. This minimizes the disruption of future traffic flows, allows access to homes and businesses during the construction sequence, and minimizes costly removal of useable infrastructure.	The Efficiency Work Group is considering recommending the following: <i>“Phase construction of urban arterials to build from the outside lanes inward. This would allow for stormwater utilities and other utilities to be put in place at the time of initial roadway construction and eliminate costly relocation at a later date.”</i>
(R) Work with Lancaster County to establish the future grade for section line roads	Consider establishing roadway grades prior to subdivisions developing along section line roads (i.e., future arterials) to reduce the need for costly future grading and minimize the need for such ancillary design features as retaining walls.	The Efficiency Work Group is considering recommendation of the following: <i>“Coordinate with the county on the design and alignment of new county pavement projects within the city’s future growth tiers.”</i>
(S) Review ways for maximizing the use of existing paved county roads in newly annexed areas of the city.	Consider how paved county roads can be used for a period of time after city annexation occurs in order to minimize impacts on street construction funding. This should include review of the alignment of existing county roads and of development pressures requiring upgrading roadway facilities.	The Efficiency Work Group is considering recommendation of the following: <i>“Make efficient use of paved county roads as the city phases in urban improvements.”</i>

